



...supporting school-family-community partnerships across Montana

Learning Partnerships:

Schools, Families and Communities Working Together to Help Children Learn

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Poplar Schools' Home Visit Project

Highlight YOUR school's parent involvement program in the next issue! E-mail info@wordinc.org or sbarmeyer@co.missoula.mt.us.

Helpful Websites

Resources for Classroom Professionals

- 1) **Parent-Teacher Conference Tip Sheets for Principals, Teachers, and Parents (General Interest)** This new resource from the Harvard Family Research Project will help all those involved in conferences to work together, so that conferences are successful and result in improved outcomes for children.
<http://www.hfrp.org/var/hfrp/storage/fckeditor/File/Parent-Teacher-ConferenceTipSheet-100610.pdf>
- 2) **How to be a Homework Helper (General Interest)** The ideas in this article could be provided to parents to help them become appropriately involved in their children's homework. Strategies for elementary, middle and high school are included.
<http://www.education.com/magazine/article/homework-helper/>
- 3) **Engage Every Parent: Identifying your Goals for Parent Engagement (General Interest)** This is an excerpt from a book that includes these topics: identifying what you need from parents; promoting clear, two-way communication; solving the parent-child-homework equation; volunteers; and positive outcomes for young people.
<http://www.parentinvolvementmatters.org/articles/engage-every-parent.html>
- 4) **When Will You Phone Home? (General Interest)** This article from Education Week's *Teacher Magazine* focuses on building relationships with students and their families.
http://blogs.edweek.org/teachers/leading_from_the_classroom/2010/09/when_will_you_phone_home.html
- 5) **Reaching Out to Diverse Populations: What Can Schools Do to Foster Family-School Connections? (General Interest)** This brief from the National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools discusses specific strategies for outreach to families with diverse backgrounds. <http://www.sedl.org/connections/resources/rb/rb5-diverse.pdf>
- 6) **Parent/Guardian Home Support Volunteer Program (Elementary)** This Yakima School District program for volunteering at home "is designed to engage 'all families' with an emphasis on those who work full-time and find it difficult to be engaged in school sponsored activities that generally occur during the regular school day and families from low-income and diverse cultural backgrounds who often do not feel comfortable in school."
<http://www.k12.wa.us/EarlyLearning/StartingStrong/Practices.aspx> (Click on Parent/Guardian Home Support Volunteer Program under Family Engagement.)

Resources for Administration

- 7) **Parent-Teacher Conference Tip Sheets for Principals, Teachers, and Parents (General Interest)** This new resource from the Harvard Family Research Project will help all those involved in conferences work together, so that conferences are successful and result in improved outcomes for children.
<http://www.hfrp.org/var/hfrp/storage/fckeditor/File/Parent-Teacher-ConferenceTipSheet-100610.pdf>
- 8) **Ideas to Increase Parent Communication in Schools (General Interest)** This blog entry on *Educators Royal Treatment* suggests a variety of ways to better communicate with

families, including the use of technology and social media.

<http://www.educatorsroyaltreatment.com/2010/04/08/ideas-to-increase-parent-communication-in-schools/>

- 9) **Reaching Out to Diverse Populations: What Can Schools Do to Foster Family-School Connections? (General Interest)** This brief from the National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools discusses specific strategies for outreach to families with diverse backgrounds. <http://www.sedl.org/connections/resources/rb/rb5-diverse.pdf>
- 10) **Do You CARE? (Preschool)** The first 90 days are extremely important for helping families become comfortable leaving their child in a care facility. This article from ExchangeEveryDay briefly describes the need to connect with families early in order to help children thrive in stable child care arrangements. Read the article and the comments of other readers at: <http://www.childcareexchange.com/eed/view/2525/>
- 11) **Parent and Community Involvement in a College/Career-Ready Culture (High School)** This report from the Texas Comprehensive center of SEDL Includes Appendix A, which profiles successful school or district parental involvement programs, and Appendix B, which includes a “variety of strategies [derived from research] for involving parents and community members in preparing students for success after high school.” <http://txcc.sedl.org/resources/briefs/number2/index.html>

Research and Policy

- 12) **Family Engagement: A Shared Responsibility (General Interest)** This article from the Harvard Family Research Project discusses “how families, schools, and communities can create a shared responsibility for children’s learning and academic success. The three dimensions of this approach include creating opportunities for family engagement, building co-constructed roles that outline families’ and schools’ responsibilities, and learning about effective ways to engage families in children’s learning.” <http://www.hfrp.org/publications-resources/browse-our-publications/family-engagement-a-shared-responsibility>
- 13) **A Look at Community Schools (General Interest)** This article from the Center for American Progress notes that “schools that integrate student services and a high-quality educational experience have a positive effect on students and their families in a variety of areas including student achievement, school attendance, and parent involvement.” Find a summary of the report or download the full report at: http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2009/10/community_schools.html
- 14) **Parent Involvement and Children’s Academic and Social Development in Elementary School** This study from the June 2010 issue of Child Development looked at “maternal and teacher reports of parent involvement and children’s standardized achievement scores, social skills, and problem behaviors.” Parent involvement in elementary school was linked with a decrease in problem behaviors and improvements in social skills. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2010.01447.x/abstract;jsessionid=17699278F553C56ED03291FC58A49516.d01t02>
- 15) **Connections Count: Improving Family and Community Involvement in Secondary Schools** Studies and literature on family involvement in secondary schools are coming to “three main conclusions: parents want more and better information to guide their students through middle level and high school; Students benefit from family and community involvement in high school; [and] educators in middle level and high schools must take responsibility for developing goal-linked partnership programs that reach all families and that help students succeed.” Read more in this article written by Joyce Epstein of the National

Network of Partnership Schools at Johns Hopkins University:

<http://www.principals.org/Portals/0/Content/56190.pdf>

16) **Parent and Community Involvement in a College/Career-Ready Culture (High School)**

This report from the Texas Comprehensive center of SEDL summarizes nine years of research and concludes that there are “two types of parental involvement that are important indicators of college attendance and completion-postsecondary planning and parental support and encouragement. These indicators apply across cultural and socioeconomic boundaries, but parents often need assistance with their endeavors due to inadequate information and other barriers.” <http://txcc.sedl.org/resources/briefs/number2/index.html>

Training and Grants

17) **National Parent Information Resource Center Webinars** This series of four webinars is archived and include: 1) Transforming Schools Through Family, School, and Community Engagement; 2) A New Day: Family, School, and Community Engagement in Education Reform; 3) Data Driven: Making Student and School Data Accessible and Meaningful to Families; and 4) The Teacher-Parent Relationship: Using Professional Development to Improve Family and Community Engagement.

http://www.nationalpirc.org/engagement_webinars/.

18) **Strengthen Families to Improve Involvement** This archived presentation from the School 2 Home Communication Forum features three strategies used by the Peoria Transition Center in Arizona that “show how the school strives to remove barriers that prevent parents from getting involved.” <http://www.s2hcomm.com/> (Under Workshops and Events, click on “Click here for archived web seminars” and then look for May 2008. Numerous other archived workshops are also listed.)

19) **Toyota TAPESTRY Grants for Science Teachers** This “ program offers grants to K–12 science teachers for innovative projects that enhance science education in the school and/or school district. 50 large grants totaling \$500,000 in all, will be awarded this year. To apply for funding, qualified teachers must write a Toyota TAPESTRY proposal according to the proposal requirements. The deadline for the completion of the online application is... February 23, 2011. <http://tapestry.nsta.org/>

20) **Karen Cox Memorial Grants** “This program is not intended to replace school funding, rather it is meant to assist educators who selflessly reach into their own pockets for classroom supplies. Montana educators can apply to the Foundation for funds expended on behalf of the classroom.” [http://www.mea-](http://www.mea-mft.org/our_foundation/programs/karen_cox_memorial_grants.aspx)

[mft.org/our_foundation/programs/karen_cox_memorial_grants.aspx](http://www.mea-mft.org/our_foundation/programs/karen_cox_memorial_grants.aspx)

21) **Lowe’s Toolbox for Education Grants** Lowe’s is seeking “ways to provide the tools that help our educators and parent groups through these challenging times efficiently and with the greatest impact... [B]asic needs will take priority.” The spring deadline for applications is February 18, 2011. Read more at: <http://www.toolboxforeducation.com/index.html>

School Spotlight

This school year some of the teachers in the Poplar Schools have been busily making phone calls to the families of a random selection of their students and asking to visit their homes. Then they visit their students’ homes for short chats about how the school year is going for them, thus learning more about their students and their family life. Sometimes visits are held in community locations, but the home is often a more comfortable setting for the family. Visits usually last about 20 minutes, with the teacher actively listening and learning more about the student and family. The teachers say that they enjoy the home visits because they learn a lot of valuable information

about the student, and it is important for students to see their teachers and families all working together to support them. Families say that they learn a lot of valuable information about how to help their children in school, and they like to see new positive relationships being built by the teachers. The home visiting project in Poplar is based on a model called the “Parent-Teacher Home Visit Project” that is based in Sacramento, California. Other schools in Montana are also adopting this model, with training provided by the Montana PIRC. (Adapted from an article written by Chelsea Talaski)

Helpful Websites

Academic Development Institute’s Solid Foundation: <http://www.adi.org/solidfoundation/>

ERIC (Education Resources Information Center) Digest: <http://www.eric.ed.gov/>

Families-Schools.org: <http://www.families-schools.org/>

Harvard Family Research Project: <http://www.hfrp.org/>

Subscribe to their FREE e-newsletters from the Family Involvement Network of Educators and the Evaluation Exchange at: <http://www.hfrp.org/subscribe/>

National Network of Partnership Schools: <http://www.csos.jhu.edu/P2000/center.htm>

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL):

(Search the site for parent involvement, etc.) <http://www.nwrel.org/index.php>

Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL): <http://www.sedl.org/>

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